

UNITED STATES v. JAMES LAFRANCE

EXHIBIT A – SUPPORT LETTERS

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October 19, 2021

To The Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni:

I have been married to James LaFrance for 36 years I met Jim in 1983 when I was working part time as a waitress. His family used to come in to the restaurant I worked at every Sunday for breakfast. We were engaged in 1984 and married in 1985. He came from a wonderful family that I adored. During the past 36 years of marriage I feel that we have had a good marriage. As in any marriage we have had some difficulties but I think that we worked together to overcome any problems that we may have had and maintained a very successful marriage.

We have one daughter, Lindsay that Jim and I both cherish. I believe that Lindsay knows that we would both do anything for her and that we love her very much. Jim was always a good husband father and provider for our family. In spite of what he is accused of I feel that he has always been a good role model for Lindsay.

I work for J. H. Maxymillian, Inc. as an administrative assistant to the owner James Maxymillian. I started working for Mr. Maxymillian in 1988. After my daughter was born in 1991 I left the company and opened an in home day care. I ran that successfully until 1999 at which time I returned to work for Mr. Maxymillian and am currently still employed for him.

Jim worked at Bedard Brothers in Cheshire throughout most of our marriage. He worked there for approximately 23 years and was their top salesman for most of this time. It was a stressfully job because it was mostly commission work and he always put the pressure on himself to be the top producer. This could cause him to be irritable when he came home at times but nothing more than that, there was never any physical abuse. Jim developed a heart condition and because of the stress decided to retire at age 62.

I continued to work, this gave Jim a lot of free time alone. With so much time on his hands Jim became bored. Jim started spending a lot of time on the computer. I believe this is when he got sucked into the internet sites that he should not have

been on. He developed an addiction that grabbed ahold of him and wouldn't let go. Jim and I could normally talk about anything but this became a secret he couldn't share even with me. I truly feel that if he had come to me we could have worked through it and gotten him the help he so desperately needed.

I do not condone anything that Jim has done I am beyond hurt and devastated and have spent the last two years trying to figure out just how this could have happened to such a smart caring man. With a heavy heart I am proceeding with a divorce but after being together for so many good years I still want to give Jim the moral support he desperately needs at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa LaFrance". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Melissa LaFrance

October 29, 2021

To the Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni,

My name is Jane LaFrance Kulpa and I am James (Jim) LaFrance's younger sister. I am writing this letter in support of the man I have known and loved for the last 63 years but first allow me to tell you about myself.

I grew up in a very stable, loving, and supportive family in Adams and then North Adams, Massachusetts with my older sister, Carol, brother Jim and our parents Donald and Eleanor LaFrance who had been married for 59 years as of 2009 when they both passed away. Dad was a stockbroker and mom stayed at home with us.

I currently live in New Hampshire with my husband of 38 years. We have three grown children of whom we are extremely proud. We have one grandson and another on the way.

David, my husband, has been retired for 3 years now.

I have been employed by Southern New Hampshire Medical Center in Nashua, NH as a Health Unit Coordinator in their Surgical Services unit for the past 10 years. I was a stay-at-home mom from 1990-2011.

In regards to Jim, he was the stereotypical big brother, i.e. teasing me, "assigning" me what he felt was a good nickname, playing outside with me and the neighborhood kids, being frustrating, playing board games with the family, etc...all the things brothers do. As we became adults we developed a closer relationship enjoying things like attending family birthdays and always being together on the major holidays.

Jim married Missy in 1985. She is an amazingly wonderful and strong woman. I love her dearly. Their daughter, Lindsay, came along in 1991. She has grown into a beautiful and terrific woman also.

Jim was a good father, a fair disciplinarian, and a loving, caring dad whether it was escorting Lindsay to father-daughter dances when she was younger to advising as she grew into adulthood.

Jim graduated from the Culinary Institute of America after high school and held jobs as a chef at various establishments. After several years he found it was not a career he wished to pursue.

He eventually found his niche as a car salesman being employed by the same company for many years until his retirement. He excelled at his job (top salesman frequently). I had the opportunity to see him interact with customers on occasion and I was impressed with his patience and honesty with the customer and his knowledge and skill in his profession.

Jim and Missy have many friends with whom they would go hiking, boating, play cards, etc.

They worked well as a team in many aspects of married life including preparing dinner, house maintenance, errands, parenting, etc. He shouldered his share of the responsibilities.

In 2008 our mom was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and our dad with Alzheimer's. Mom passed away in July 2009 and dad passed away in September of the same year. Throughout that year, Carol, Jim, Missy and I did everything possible to take care of our parents. Carol and I basically moved in with them for the day-to-day care. Jim would mow their lawn and take care of the household problems. He and Missy would treat us all to a wonderful dinner on numerous occasions while we were away from our families tending to mom and dad.

Jim was terrific with mom and dad and rushed to join us at mom's side as she was dying... a loving son.

I hope these few details about Jim, his upbringing, and his life in general help you to understand that there is a lot of good in him. I humbly ask you to please take that into consideration when imposing sentence.

Thank you,
Jane L. Kulpa

October 18, 2021

Re: James D. LaFrance

Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni:

I have been asked to write a support letter for James D. LaFrance. I am happy to do so.

My name is Carol Atwater and I am Jim's older sister. There are 3 siblings total. I am the oldest at 67, then Jim at 65, and our sister Jane at 63. We were brought up in Adams, a small town in western Massachusetts. Both of our parents were born and brought up in Adams also. They met in high school and were married in 1950. Our parents were always there for us and we were a close knit family. Our dad was a disciplinarian but very fair. We went to Catholic school from K through 8th grade and then went to public high school. We were taught moral values, and a good sense of integrity and responsibility. So I lived with Jim until he left for college – he went to the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park NY. He loved cooking and thought he wanted to be a chef. However, once he started working in the restaurant business he changed his mind. He found his niche in car sales and was extremely successful at it. He won many awards during his career. He was a wonderful provider for his wife and daughter. He and his wife really and truly enjoyed being married and they shared many things together – vacations, trips, boating, camping etc. When he needed something done around their beautiful house, he learned how to do it and was a perfectionist.

He was very fun loving and usually was the life of the party. He and his wife had many friends and were always going somewhere and doing something. Of course, Jim met many people because of the line of work that he was in. Many of his customers were repeat customers because they knew they could trust him to give them the best possible deal.

When our parents were both sick in 2009 – my mom had esophageal cancer and my father had Alzheimer's, my sister and I took care of them until their passing in mid to late 2009. Mom died in July and Dad in September. Then my brother and his wife took over and cleaned out the house, hired the realtor etc. We sold the house a year later and there were no problems amongst us. We all get along very well. Jim and his wife took over doing the Christmas celebration dinner and we always had a great time.

I think he was 60 when he retired which was in 2016. He was doing a lot of projects at home to keep busy and seemed to be enjoying it tremendously.


When I found out what had happened and what he did, I couldn't believe it. I didn't know what to do or think. There were so many emotions. It's like the brother I know and the person that did these things are 2 different people!!

I hope this letter helps in your decision making process.

Sincerely,

Carol J. Atwater

Debra Tart


Pittsfield, MA 01201

October 25, 2021

Dear Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni;

My name is Debra Tart and I am the owner of The Berkshire Dog, a dog treat bakery in Lanesboro, Ma. I reside in Pittsfield, MA. I met James "Jim" LaFrance and his wife Melissa "Missy" approximately seven years ago through mutual friends. My husband and I became very friendly with them and enjoyed hiking, boating and dining out together. We also spent many holidays together. We had quite a large circle of friends that we would get together with almost every weekend.

I always found Jim to be pleasant and good natured. I admired him for his very strong work ethic. Jim worked in car sales for his entire career and I believe he held the position of top salesman for many of those years. The man that I got to know worked hard, had a beautiful home, nice cars, recreational vehicles and motorcycles. He provided extremely well for his family and seemed to be generally happy. Jim is an incredible cook and enjoyed sharing his recipes and cooking techniques with anyone that was interested in learning different ways to prepare certain meals. The man that I knew was very patient and funny.

I honestly believe in my heart that Jim made mistakes and has an illness. I've always felt very comfortable with him and miss the "Jim" that I knew.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope it sheds a little light on the person that I became friends with.

Sincerely,

Debra S. Tart

Debra S. Tart

Kevin M. Tart

[REDACTED]

North Adams, MA 01247

October 22, 2021

Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni,

My name is Kevin Tart and I have known the LaFrance family for several years. I have successfully overcome the disease of addiction that lasted over a decade. I know first hand how addiction can consume a person and cause them to act on an overwhelming compulsion, which does not reflect on their character as a human being. I wholeheartedly believe that Jim LaFrance suffers from the disease of addiction which played a substantial role in his mistakes, it is not in his character to intentionally harm anyone whatsoever.

I have been on multiple outings and weekend getaways with the LaFrance family, as well as considered them a part of my own family as we spent several holidays together. He was consistently a polite, outgoing and respectable man. I always saw a man who provided for his family, laughed often and was genuinely a good person to be around. He raised a daughter who is a kind and beautiful person.

Jim has worked hard for his career and to build a life that anyone would be proud of. Everyone makes mistakes at some point in their lives, and I can say that this situation is in no way a representation of Jim's true character. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Tart

Honorable Mark H. Mastroianni, 11/8/21

My name is Lisa Maston. I work as a Clinical Support Rep at a local hospital. I've been in the medical field for about 42 years. I've known Jim for 28 years. I first met him through work when he was going through a difficult time in his marriage and needed some professional help. It was at that time when I met Jim's wife Melissa. Their situation worked its way out and my husband & I became very good friends with Jim & Missy. We did everything together; dinner at each others house, going out to events, vacationing, sharing holidays. We met & got to know both their families. Everyone got along and had lots of good times.

Jim was top salesman at his job for many years, actually right up until he retired. It was his drive & determination that kept him at the top. He felt compelled to work hard to provide a very comfortable life for himself, his wife and his daughter, and he did. He had the American Dream.

Sincerely,
Lisa A Maston

November 11, 2021

Dear Honorable Mark G. Mastroianni,

My name is Ariel Ramirez. I completed graduate school in 2019 and since have spent my time being of service to others and working to better my community.

I met Mr. LaFrance in 2007. His daughter and I went to high school together and have been best friends since my freshman year of high school. In high school much of my time was spent at the LaFrance's house. They included me in family vacations and holidays. My home life was very dysfunctional, and as a result I lived with the LaFrance's for a short time. From 2007 on Mr. LaFrance served as a father figure in my life. He was the person who brought me gas when I ran out on a back road my first winter I could drive. He sat in a hot smelly gym to watch me graduate high school, even though his own daughter had already graduated two years earlier. Most recently, he was the first to take us all out dinner when I graduated from my master's program. I will be forever grateful for his support and encouragement over the last 14 years.

Mr. LaFrance is well known in our community, having been a car salesman the majority of his career. Jim has many friends and a large supportive network in our community, the largest support being his daughter and ex-wife.

I ask the court to consider the whole of who Mr. LaFrance is in his sentencing. I ask the court to consider Mr. LaFrance's medical status and take into account the brevity of time that may be available to Mr. LaFrance's daughter to work with her father to heal the damaged caused while Mr. LaFrance is still able to do so.

Thank you for your time and consideration in Mr. LaFrance's sentencing.

Respectfully,

Ariel Ramirez

Ariel Ramirez

Timothy Watkins

From: Lindsay LaFrance [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 8:14 PM
To: Timothy Watkins
Subject: James LaFrance/ letter

My name is Lindsay LaFrance and James LaFrance is my father. I am 30 years old, and for at least 27 of those years, my Dad always put his family first. I knew who had my back, and it was always without a shadow of a doubt, both of my parents.

Addiction is a terrible disease and although this situation can be easily persuaded into being a taboo subject, I firmly believe that the power of the mind and loneliness, took over my Dads newly retired time and was taken to a dark and horrible place. I don't condone what my father has been accused of, but I still love him and believe that this is a disease. I don't believe that some people who have this infliction have a place to go for help which may have changed my Dads course if given the option. I believe my Dad is not a bad person, although terribly misguided in his actions.

My Dad did not give any outward appearances of personality changes, although I didn't live at home at the time. When I did see him, he was the same Dad I have always had. My dad and I used to go and grab a quick beer together on my day off, or my family and I would go boating together on one of the nearby lakes. I was happier in my life with my parents in it. We all had a good relationship and enjoyed each other's company; I miss it more than any words can say and it's painful to talk about. My Dad has a heart condition and the possibility my father will die in jail is a very real outcome which scares me. I don't want him to die in prison.

I took me awhile to write this. I couldn't find the words to put down, but I love my Dad and hope reading this, that is understood.

Thank you for taking the time.

Sincerely
Lindsay LaFrance